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The next Harvard

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# THE NEXT HARVARD

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# THE NEXT HARVARD

AS SEEN BY

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH



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## FOREWORD

THE observations in this booklet appeared originally in *The Atlantic Monthly* for May 1941 under the title of 'The Next Harvard.' A reprinting in the present form for distribution among a limited number of alumni and friends of the University has been made possible through the courtesy of the publisher and of the author.

The impressions set down here by Mr. MacLeish resulted largely from his service as Curator of the Nieman Foundation in Harvard University prior to accepting his present appointment as Director of the Library of Congress. They were not written as a comprehensive and detailed analysis of Harvard's problems, but rather as one man's view of some of the major lines of development now in progress at Cambridge. It is hoped they will form a record of interest to friends and alumni of the University, not only because they draw attention to some of the current needs of Harvard, but, also, because Mr. MacLeish has a feeling for the guiding principles which in the past have underlain the growth and maintenance of great Universities.



# THE NEXT HARVARD



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COLLEGE presidents are supposed to be spending their most anxious thoughts these days on matters like the draft. Conceivably they are. But beneath these current anxieties there is an older anxiety which is no less urgent. Long before the present crisis had reached its present proportion, certain college presidents had begun to ask themselves — and their trustees and their alumni and their principal benefactors — a question with an ominous sound. The question was this: What is the future of privately supported institutions of learning in a world of rising taxes and diminishing gifts?

This paper is an attempt to supply, not an answer to that question, but a body of material relevant to its discussion — what the lawyers would call, perhaps, a record. The record is the record of present change and present directions at Harvard. It is a fac-

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tual record only. But it has its meaning. What any institution will become a dozen years from now may be read in part in the facts and figures which indicate the direction of its development.

Like other private institutions, Harvard must face the fact that gifts to the university in the foreseeable future will not equal in bulk the gifts of the late twenties. Like other private institutions, it must admit that the peak of enrollment has probably been reached. And like other private institutions it must therefore accept the fact that this period of its history will be a period of organization within existing frontiers, rather than a period of extension of existing frontiers.

Harvard is the oldest university in America and perhaps the richest in the world. Its endowment is close to a hundred and forty millions. Its library is the most complete university library of which there is any record. Its faculties include now, and have included in the past, an astonishing proportion of the most distinguished scholars produced in this country. The names of its famous graduates ring like iron bells across the history of the Republic. But Harvard, like other univer-

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sities and colleges dependent on private gift, is threatened by the contraction of the securities markets and the decline of interest rates. And Harvard, for all its history, is endangered as are other universities by a European political revolution which attempts to substitute propaganda for science and mob emotion for disciplined thought: a revolution which would, if it could, grind Harvard with Yale and Princeton and Chicago and Pennsylvania and Stanford and the rest into the rubbish which was once the University of Prague and the University of Heidelberg and the University of Bonn.

## *Harvard Has Always Been in Process of Evolution*

JOHN Harvard's Harvard was a small pocket of godliness in a profane world. Its four walls, with their eight divinity students and their parcel of treatises and classical texts, were a stockade against the wilderness. Its lofty purpose was to preserve, in the midst of the barbarities of the new world, the morality, the manners, and the learning of the old. But John Harvard's Harvard was in process of change before the cows had been driven from the cow pastures where it was built. By the time two centuries were out, the college which had been founded as a stronghold of culture against the barbarities of the new world was itself a creator of the new world. The stockade was down, and the university had entered America. The growing Republic needed trained men, and Harvard built the professional schools to train them. Men graduating from Harvard in the century of expansion did more to create and re-create the complicated, curious, deeply old, strongly new culture of the United States than men from any other training. Men



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trained at Harvard taught other men, adapted the English law to the needs of the new country, built railroads, administered the government, cured diseases, fought wars, studied planets, trees, rocks, civilizations. Nothing could have been farther from the Harvard of the early seventeenth century than the Harvard of the nineteenth century, and yet both were Harvard and the second was the continuation of the first.

From the beginning of its history the next Harvard has been in process of evolution, and the next Harvard is in process of evolution now. Harvard, like other universities, is committed to one time and one time only — the future toward which the American Republic moves. The questions, therefore, of those who attempt to read the future of American private universities are questions to which Harvard is able to supply many answers.

## *The Tendency toward Synthesis of Knowledge*

THE swing toward specialization and isolation of knowledge seems to have come to a temporary stop in our generation, and the thrust is now in the opposite direction. Like plants bred up to a point where further advance is possible only by cross fertilization, certain of the isolated sciences seem to depend for their future growth upon interchange with other bodies of knowledge. Astronomers borrow from physicists, physicists borrow from mathematicians, mathematicians borrow from philosophers, philosophers borrow from psychologists, and psychologists borrow from neurologists. To the lay observer the consequences are confusing but exciting. To the universities they are more: they are a challenge. For the past organization of the universities — Harvard among them — has been such that commerce between the various fields of knowledge is difficult, as difficult almost as commerce between nationalistic states.

One of the most significant new developments at Harvard is a development which

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attempts to deal with this difficulty by making provision for experts in different fields to work together on problems common to them all. An example more or less typical may be taken from the Medical School. The innumerable sciences which have evolved around the study of the human body may be divided, as laymen know, into the sciences of analysis or diagnosis on the one hand, and the sciences of treatment or therapy on the other. As laymen also know, analysis has in general outrun treatment, so that physicians can recognize more afflictions than they can cure. What Harvard hopes to do is to establish a means of communication between the various fields of science concerned in the treatment of disease, so as to narrow that gap. Specifically, the university hopes to bring together in a working relationship the biological chemists, physiologists, and practising physicians whose coöperation is necessary to the advance of the chemistry of healing — pharmacotherapy.

## *The Cure for Pernicious Anæmia*

THE background of the proposal is one of the great achievements of modern medicine: the discovery of a cure for pernicious anæmia by Doctors George R. Minot and William P. Murphy of Harvard and the translation of that discovery into terms of practicable therapy by Dr. Edwin J. Cohn and his co-workers in the Harvard Medical School.

When Dr. Minot began his researches in 1914, pernicious anæmia was a mortal disease. Patients sank and recovered in confusing waves of illness, but the end was invariably death. Dr. Minot suspected from the beginning that the red blood cell deficiency associated with the disease could be made up by proper food consumption. But because of the natural rhythm of the disease it was some years before he was able to state definitely that liver was a cure. Eventually, in 1926, the discovery was made public, receiving general confirmation. And in 1934 a Nobel prize was awarded to Dr. Minot, Dr. Murphy, and Dr. George H. Whipple of Rochester. Dr. Whipple's share in the work had been the study of the treatment of

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anæmia in animals experimentally made anæmic and the demonstration that daily feeding with liver produced more rapid recoveries than other forms of treatment.

The Minot-Murphy-Whipple discovery, important as it was, was not, however, the final solution of the problem. Liver in bulk was not a practicable remedy in all cases, and the essential therapeutic element in liver could not be isolated and extracted because no one yet knew *why* liver alone cured the disease. The job to be done obviously required the coöperative work of laboratory chemists and practising physicians. Dr. Minot and his associate, Dr. William B. Castle, provided the medical experience. As members of the staff of the Medical School they had access to many hospitals, some of them close to the school. Dr. Cohn, dropping all other activities, concerned himself with the laboratory end of the experiment. The result was the final conquest of the disease. The pure extract was isolated in such form as to be available for every patient, and pernicious anæmia disappeared from the lists of mortal diseases.

The possibilities of planned coöperation

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being thus established by experience, Harvard hopes to extend the practice. An organizational link between the Medical School laboratories and the hospitals already exists, and Dr. Cohn and Dr. Minot have proved to any man's satisfaction what can be done by the teaming up of biological chemists, physiologists, and practising physicians.

## *The Fatigue Laboratory*

ONE of the incidental blessings of the great depression has been the enhanced status of the social sciences. As the social and economic order creaked across the dangerous years following 1929, undergraduates turned in unexampled numbers to courses in social and economic subjects, bringing new, pressing, and frequently unanswerable questions. And as the new Administration in Washington began its attempt in 1933 to deal with the economic evil by taking thought as to what should be done to cure it, more and more government departments turned to the universities for expert advice. Government, once having admitted the need of scholarship in dealing with social and economic problems, may be expected to turn to the universities again in time of crisis. And students, having once discovered the significance of economic and social learning in their own lives, may be expected to continue their search for such knowledge — so long, at least, as the present economic crisis continues.

To meet that changed situation the de-

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partments concerned with the social sciences at Harvard have initiated a variety of undertakings using techniques of coöperative scholarship similar to those already developed in the Medical School. The Harvard Business School, founded with the threefold purpose of training young men for business, conducting research projects in the general business field, and promoting the interests of industry, has organized one of the most interesting of these experiments. The Business School realized that American business men had critical problems in handling human beings. Millions of dollars were being spent to analyze materials and to perfect machinery, but too little was being done to improve the physical and social adjustment of labor to industry, largely because too little was known about human beings and their social behavior. The common reproach, in the words of Dr. Mayo, was that 'modern America knows more about building machines than about building men.' Accordingly, Professor Elton Mayo's Department of Industrial Research and the Fatigue Laboratory under the lead of Dr. L. J. Henderson were established in the Business School.



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These two undertakings are correlated. A variety of workers with different backgrounds, including psychology, social anthropology, biochemistry, business, and engineering, have been working coöperatively. They collaborate in the study of men in everyday life, thus contributing to what may be described as human biology. The guiding idea of the enterprise as it has developed is that certain aspects of human biology bear the same relation to the work of the Business School that other departments of human biology bear to the work of the Medical School. The importance of this view has been appreciated by the Rockefeller Foundation, which has provided generous support for both departments, and the university has recognized the wide bearing of the subject by establishing a Committee on Industrial Physiology, under which these and other departments coöperate.

The work of the Fatigue Laboratory in its relation to this whole task is closely associated with that of the Department of Clinical Medicine in the Medical School and with the work of the Department of Hygiene in its dealing with students. One of the first proj-

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ects was an effort to define and measure the changes which occur under working conditions. Equipment was installed to test the effects of physical effort at a variety of temperatures, altitudes, and atmospheres. Research workers, acting often as their own guinea pigs, are now engaged in checking, by blood and metabolism and other tests, biochemical, physiological, and psychological effects of exertion.

Even preceding this, studies were instituted bearing on the understanding and interpretation of working groups as social groups. In 1929, Professor Mayo and his associates coöperated with the Western Electric Company in an exhaustive survey of worker psychology in its Hawthorne, Illinois plant, involving thousands of interviews over a three-year period. Several inquiries along the lines of social anthropology were subsequently undertaken in the deep South and at Newburyport in Massachusetts.

Such work is correlated, interpreted, and the results made available to industry as rapidly as may be. Properly utilized, the results should prove valuable to industry and to government. Two of the conclusions

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reached at Hawthorne were that the most-used incentives — such as wages, bonuses, and even so-called good working conditions — are often definitely less important than effective handling of social situations, and that social sentiments and community conditions have a definite relation to the adjustment of workers to their jobs.

## *The Graduate School of Public Administration*

A SECOND experimental undertaking in the social sciences uses the same technique of coöperative scholarship in an even more ambitious program. When Harvard University was founded, doctors learned their craft in barbershops, the law was a disreputable calling, and business men were known as 'traders.' Little by little these occupations became professions demanding of their practitioners both special knowledge and intellectual background. But while law and medicine became respectable professions with graduate schools of their own, and while business became the principal American occupation with numerous and frequent academic recognitions, the profession of government, which was a respected profession in Massachusetts Bay and which John Adams considered the only study worthy of a mature intelligence, remained without academic standing. Not until 1935 did the university establish a graduate school devoted to the profession of government, as its great Law School and Medical School were de-

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voted to the professions of medicine and law.

In that year Lucius N. Littauer gave two and a quarter millions for a Graduate School of Public Administration, and the university called together its political scientists, its economists, its historians, its social psychologists, and its lawyers to determine how and to what end the money should be spent. A million had been set aside to house the School, and the problem was what to do with the balance. For a year and a half, while the monumental granite building in front of the Law School was in process of construction, exploratory conferences were held on this question. And eventually a conclusion was reached. It was evident, first, that there were no useful precedents. Public Administration had only recently arrived as an academic subject. It was evident, secondly, that analogies were dangerous. Public Administration could not be taught like medicine or engineering, but required new methods to meet its unique difficulties. It was decided, therefore, to adopt an experimental practice. Men would not be trained to *get* jobs in government, but men *with* jobs in government would be brought back to the

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university to study the problems of the profession in which they were engaged.

The first, and the inevitable, consequence of that decision was to limit the student body to approximately fifteen men. The young government employee is rarely provided with independent means, and the scheme could therefore function only if full scholarships were provided. Even Mr. Littauer's generous gift, invested at present income rates, would not supply stipends for more than fifteen scholarships. But the experience of the School seems to have justified this approach. Opening in the fall of 1938, with fifteen Littauer Scholars drawn from federal, state, and municipal services, and with 144 graduate students from other departments sharing the work of the seminars, the School of Public Administration has already established its place in the university. It has demonstrated the feasibility of the basic plan. It has demonstrated the possibility of bringing the various disciplines together, using, as it has, the social scientists already on the faculties. And it has demonstrated, further, the advantages to the university of a system which brings men from public life

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directly in contact with teachers and research scholars.

The principal gain in this latter direction is not from the Littauer Fellows themselves, who are necessarily men of limited first-hand experience of public affairs, but rather from the members of the School's faculty and the consultants brought in to direct its seminars. Dean of the School is John H. Williams of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. Its most famous member is Dr. Heinrich Brüning, formerly Chancellor of the German Reich. And its consultants include, in addition to members of the university faculty, outsiders distinguished in business or public service.

The School is now, and will increasingly become, a centre for the social sciences where teachers and students from the departments of economics and political sciences may meet with teachers and students from the School of Law, the School of Business, and other such divisions of the university, for the discussion of those problems of government which touch upon the work of all. And it is now and will increasingly become a stage for the discussions of teachers and public offi-

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ciala which muat inevitably become more frequent aa the interdependence of government and aololarahip in a democratic state ia more clearly recognized. The School, in other words, ia a aymbol of two of the principal tendencies in the univeraity today: the tendency to break through the academic fences dividing fields of academic knowledge, and the tendency to recognize the function of the univeraity in the modern world — or in that part of the modern world in which men still endeavor to govern themaelves in the light of knowledge.



## *The Nieman Fellowships*

THAT the Littauer School is bound to have a very considerable influence on the university is indicated by the fact that its basic conception has already been applied in another, if related, field. When Agnes Wahl Nieman of Milwaukee, widow of the proprietor of the *Milwaukee Journal*, left something better than a million dollars to Harvard to 'elevate the standards of journalism,' Harvard did not devote the money to the foundation of a new school of journalism. Instead it applied to journalism the principle laid down for the Graduate School of Public Administration. The Nieman Foundation would not educate young men at Harvard to enable them to apply for jobs on newspapers, but would award scholarships to men already on newspapers to enable them to study at Harvard. There, however, the similarity ended. For where the Littauer Fellows devote their time to study of their own profession, the Nieman Fellows devote theirs to a much broader field. The difference is implicit in the distinction between the two occupations. Public Administration is a profession

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the substance of which is public administration. Journalism is a profession the substance of which is the observation of man. What the public administrator can learn from schooling is public administration. What the journalist can learn from schooling is the background — historical, psychological, economic — of the human conduct he is engaged in watching and interpreting.

In consequence the Nieman Fellowships are set up without a faculty. All courses in the university are open to the Fellows, and they are permitted, under the supervision of their Curator, to direct their study and their reading in the direction of greatest interest to themselves. In 1938-1939, the first year of the Foundation, the funds of the bequest were sufficient to provide stipends for nine Fellows, two from Alabama, one from Missouri, one from Kentucky, one from Illinois, one from Maryland, one from the District of Columbia, and two from Massachusetts. One of the Fellows specialized in Latin-American history and economics, others in labor economics, in Southern agriculture, in sciences, in political philosophy. Contact with their profession is assured by a series of

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weekly dinners attended by the Fellows and by members of the university faculties, at which visiting journalists of distinction such as John Gunther, Paul Y. Anderson, Alexander Woolcott, Walter Lippmann, William Allen White, George Seldes, Henry R. Luce, and others discuss matters of journalistic practice.

These dinners, through the attendance of university scholars of various interests, provide another means, if a less formal one, for the breaking down of departmental barriers and the centring of different disciplines upon a common problem. The Nieman Fellows of the year 1938-1939 will not forget the excitement of an evening when Henry Luce discussed the magazines *Time* and *Life* under the questioning of a dinner table which included Harvard's great philosopher, Professor Whitehead, her great astronomer, Harlow Shapley, the most eminent of her jurists, Mr. Justice Frankfurter, the well-known Harvard anthropologist, Professor Hooton, a distinguished professor of English, Kenneth Murdock, and many others. The university will not forget, for its part, the impact of a Chicago reporter who had seen

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the Detroit automobile strike at first hand and a Kentucky editor from 'the Jackson Purchase' to whom the TVA was not a textbook abstraction but a living force in a living society.

The experiment of the Nieman Fellowships has continued with undiminished success in ensuing years. In 1939-40, twelve men engaged in active newspaper work were able to take advantage of the plan; in 1940-41, fourteen; and for the year 1941-42, fifteen are expected.

## *The Graduate School of Education*

NEITHER the Nieman Foundation nor the Littauer School has lived long enough to enable any man to pass judgment upon them. But the basic idea upon which both are founded — an idea, incidentally, for which President Conant must receive, though he does not claim, full credit — has already been appraised and accepted in other and older departments of the university. The School of Education may be taken as one example. Education, like the social sciences, was forced upon the attention of the university in the years following the war. The American school, as the cornerstone of American culture, was being subjected to considerable unfriendly scrutiny and was found to reflect the worst qualities of a hasty though efficient material civilization. The number of children in schools had quadrupled following the turn of the century, normal schools and university schools of education had done a land-office business. The education of teachers was often shoddy and careless, and the product of the public schools was inferior by any exacting standard — as Harvard dis-

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covered for itself when it began to offer scholarships on a national basis in 1934. The consequence, at Harvard at least, was a complete reëxamination of the whole question of the teaching of teachers.

One result of that reëxamination is a plan to bring practising superintendents back to the university for study as the Nieman Foundation brings practising journalists. Another is a new program for the professional training of teachers for secondary schools. The major feature of the new plan is to require students of the art of teaching at Harvard to pay more attention to the *subjects* they expect to teach. One of the weaknesses of the situation obtaining in the twenties was that teaching was taught not as the teaching of *something* but as an abstract technical formula, bearing no more relation to the living content of knowledge than technical librarianship bears to the living content of libraries. A young man preparing to teach mathematics was therefore remitted to one of two undesirable alternatives. He could either do regular graduate work in mathematics and learn nothing about the technique of teaching or he could

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go to a teachers' college and learn next to nothing about mathematics. Harvard's solution of this unhappy and unreasonable division was the decision arrived at two years ago, to establish a degree of Master of Arts in Teaching to be offered jointly by the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and the Faculty of Education. The degree therefore becomes a certificate that the Master of Arts in Teaching is prepared not only to teach but to teach *something*.

But the change in policy did more than increase the value of the Harvard degree. It increased as well the prestige and the vigor of the School. The School's degree of Master of Education for men and women studying to be school superintendents and supervisors puts the School in touch with problems not only of public education but of public administration as well. This relationship results in surveys of public school systems in various parts of the country, conferences of educators, and a general ferment which is as useful inside the School as it is outside. The School runs its own laboratory and psychoeducational clinic, gives radio broadcasts for teachers and parents, makes

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movies to help slow readers, sends its students out to work and watch in the schools of seven neighboring townships, and devotes no small part of its time to the reëxamination of the theories and practices of teaching and learning which continues so actively in this generation.



## *The University Professorships*

IF THE Littauer Graduate School of Public Administration may be taken as an apt symbol of new tendencies at Harvard, and particularly of the commerce between various disciplines which is so marked a characteristic of the times, the University Professorship may be taken as the most practicable vehicle for that commerce thus far devised. The University Professorship is an endowed chair attached to no specific department. Its significance is this: university departments, like all similar human institutions, have a way of twining themselves around the income from their endowments and their budgeted funds so completely that no free funds are left for the appointment to university chairs of the occasional distinguished scholar who becomes unexpectedly available. The result is, first, a rigid departmentalization of knowledge, since all available funds are divided according to department, and secondly a freezing of university personnel, since the unexpected and powerful influences which should be introduced from time to time cannot be introduced.

The University Professorships were estab-

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lished a few years ago specifically to meet this need. Three chairs have now been created. Their incumbents are Roscoe Pound, former Dean of the Law School and a scholar of distinction in many fields; Werner Wilhelm Jaeger, one of the most distinguished classical scholars in the world; and Sumner H. Slichter, noted authority on labor, who holds the Lamont University Professorship. The immediate purpose of the University Professorships is to provide flexible funds for the purpose of appointing men who might be expected to contribute to the total university life in any field or any combination of fields. The deeper purpose is to provide the beginning of that consolidation of the university within itself which is one of the profound needs of Harvard. For though Harvard has reconciled itself to the loss of the ever-expanding frontier, and has faced the need for an organizational and functional development within, it does not follow that there are no more lands to discover and no more adventures to expect. The techniques of co-operative scholarship are continually discovering new areas for exploration between the old boundaries.

## *Experimental Geology and Geophysics*

THE new science of Geophysics may serve as an example. Geophysics is the study, by laboratory methods, of the substances of the earth and the manner of their creation. It draws chiefly upon geology, physics, and chemistry, but it needs at certain points the data of the meteorologist as well, together with the aid of the volcanologist, the astronomer, and the oceanographer. The substances of the earth cannot be studied in the field. The earth is eight thousand miles in diameter, and the field geologist cannot collect samples at a greater depth than two miles. Laboratory study is the only practicable method, and to set up laboratory models of solids acting as they do at the core of the earth it is necessary to reproduce the tremendous heats and pressures which prevail there. Experiment under such conditions demands guidance by an extraordinary type of expert in advanced physics. Harvard has such a man in the person of Professor P. W. Bridgman, who is universally acknowledged to be the world leader in high-pressure technique. And Professor Bridg-

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man's pupil, Dr. Francis Birch, has gone even beyond his master in actually applying the new technique to the many problems relating to the behavior of rocks under pressures reaching as much as 20,000 atmospheres. Although Professor Bridgman has been constantly at hand for consultation about difficult points in designing apparatus, Dr. Birch has been the operating manager of the various laboratories and is now the world court of final appeal in questions of rock properties at high pressure.

Another expert is Dr. Lewis Don Leet, Harvard's arch-detective in seismological problems. Working in his laboratory — at Oak Ridge, twenty-seven miles west of Cambridge — Dr. Leet has installed the best-equipped seismological station in existence. His sensitive instruments make continuous photographic records of earthquakes in all parts of the earth. He has won fame for his experiments with artificial earthquakes (shocks by timed dynamite explosions), whereby he has improved measurements of the speeds of earthquake waves at various depths in the planet. Knowing those speeds and learning the so-called elastic constants

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of rocks under high pressures from the experiments of his colleagues, Professor Leet has been able to identify the nature of rock layers at invisible depths. His records of arrival times and sizes of seismic waves are being sought by seismologists of every continent. Thus the Harvard geophysicists are leading the development of method in deducing the internal structure of the earth. The practical results may possibly include a discovery of the principles governing earthquakes and volcanoes, the causes of deepening harbors and collapsing mines, the strength of the earth's crust and the weakness of its core.

## *The University Library*

A UNIVERSITY library is a university's most vital organ — and, like vital organs elsewhere, is both cherished and neglected. It is only when the heart is sick that the heart is noticed, and it is only when a library fails that a university is conscious of its library. The rest of the time it indulges in the appropriate platitudes, expresses the proper pride, and complains bitterly that the library must be paid for. For a library, unlike a stadium or a dormitory, is never bought: it is always in process of purchase. Even were its collections from the past complete, — an inconceivable situation, — it would still need to acquire year by year the new works of letters, the new scholarly apparatus, the new periodicals and publications, which link those collections to the present. Civilization is a spider that hangs itself from its past on a continuously lengthening thread. To lose the latest strand is to lose connectives which, whatever their intrinsic importance, may well change all the relationships, all the meanings. It is moderately said that a lapse of ten years in li-

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brary purchases would leave gaps which could never be filled. From the merely technical point of view, this statement is correct. From a warmer and more human point of view, it is a gross understatement. A university library in which the collections were all miraculously complete to 1929, but to which nothing had been added since that date, would be a monument to death.

Harvard's library is the glory not only of that university but of American education. In point of age it is the oldest in the United States. In point of size it follows only the Library of Congress and the New York Public Library. In point of quality there are important fields where it follows no other collection. Its total holdings in Widener Memorial Library, the eighteen department libraries, the fifty special libraries, and the seven House libraries number better than four million volumes and pamphlets. But of more importance than the quantity is the quality of the books — the number of irreplaceable volumes and the number not available elsewhere in this country.

But a library is not merely a collection of

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books. It is also a means by which books may be used. Its books must be available, and available in the most effective terms. Availability means efficient cataloguing, efficient servicing, and adequate space for reading and reference. Harvard's great collections impose on her libraries obligations in these regards which are at least as heavy as the obligation to increase collections. For here new and creative labor is required. The critical reëxamination of American culture which has paid its respects to the American school system has also turned its attention to the American library system, which will be forced sooner or later to find better means of bringing books to people and people to books than any yet devised. In this labor the greatest of the university libraries will wish to play its part.

Even in a more normal period these obligations would entail a heavy burden. In a period of economic strain they entail a burden which it is almost impossible to meet. University funds are contributed to the Harvard College Library at the present time in the amount of more than \$200,000 annually, but even this subsidy leaves the periodical



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files incomplete, the stacks overflowing, cataloguing in arrears, reading space and administration space inadequate, and certain collections out of date. The situation, moreover, will probably grow worse before it can grow better, for the cost of maintenance increases automatically every year as a result of the increase in holdings.

To relieve the library from that situation and to enable it to take the offensive against its many cultural problems would cost an enormous sum. But the stakes are also tremendous. A university could lose its faculty and its students and begin again as a great university if its library remained great. But if it lost its library no conceivable faculty and no conceivable student body would hold it to its rank. Civilization follows the libraries. When the great library of Alexandria was finally destroyed by the Moors, culture migrated from the Eastern Mediterranean to the West. The Church, through the monasteries, and later through the Vatican library, bridged precariously the gulf of the Dark Ages. And with the Renaissance the libraries of Europe became the houses of civilization. A similar migration is possible

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again today. For if the great libraries of Europe should suffer the fate of the library of Alexandria, the records of western civilization would be housed, if at all, in the libraries of America.

## *The National Scholarships*

THE Harvard Library, then, needs money to continue to be what it has long been. The Harvard student body, on the contrary, needs money to become something essentially different — something it has been in process of becoming for seven years. Seven years ago, 86 per cent of Harvard's students came from the states of the eastern seaboard, well over half from New England and a majority from large cities. Harvard men in the middle states and the West did not enjoy being told that Harvard was a sectional university, but the fact was nevertheless obvious. Boys preparing to enter college in the small towns and in the rural communities of the South and West did not consider Harvard.

The first attack on that situation was made in 1934 when the Corporation appropriated money for ten fellowships for boys from six Midwestern states and, in 1935, for eleven fellowships for boys from eight states. The Corporation felt that a national university must have a student body as representative of the nation as possible. It felt

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also that if equality of opportunity were to be a reality in our rapidly stratifying society some attempt must be made to give the finest education available to the most promising boys regardless of the address of their home town or the credit rating of their fathers.

The experiment, if experiment it may be called, has been a brilliant success. Of the first ten National Scholars, all graduated with honors and eight as members of Phi Beta Kappa. All, moreover, had been active in outside college activities. As a result the Tercentenary of 1936 was made the occasion of a request for more National Scholarships to be given over a wider area. Generous donors provided a number of new funds for this purpose. Under some of these gifts awards may be made without geographical restriction; in others, such as the 'Bronson Cutting,' 'Ogden Mills,' 'Noel Morris,' and 'Stern' Funds, awards to applicants from certain specified states are preferred by the donors. About thirty scholarships are now awarded annually to students in seventeen Western and Southern states. In addition, funds have recently been provided which have made it possible to award three to five

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National Scholarships in Massachusetts each year; and following the principle of making education as widely available as possible to young men of merit, ten special Non-Resident scholarships have been created for boys who are able to attend Harvard and live at home.

The National Scholarships are unique at Harvard in at least two respects. First, they are given on a merit basis, regardless of need. Secondly, they take care of the student's entire college expenses, if necessary, and permit him to get full benefit from his college education. Once awarded, the stipend is adjusted to actual need; it may be as much as \$1000 in freshman year and \$1200 thereafter. The amount given is never made public, and no stigma of charity attaches. On the contrary, the National Scholars arrive as freshmen distinguished by having won competitive awards. Since the competitions in each state are widely publicized, and since applicants whose examinations are promising are personally interviewed by one or another of the Harvard deans, the distinction is not inconsiderable.

Fifty-nine holders of National Scholar-

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ships have completed their undergraduate studies and seventy more have passed one or more years in the college. Their records in studies and in extracurricular activities have justified both the plan and the means of selection. There is, however, one aspect of the experiment which weighs heavily on the Scholarship Committee. That is the necessity of turning down every year some four hundred candidates many of whom Harvard would be glad to have. The deans have discovered such startling talents and abilities in such unlikely habitats in the past seven years that the limitation of the scholarships to about thirty has become embarrassing and in some cases tragic.

One of the most brilliant scientific students, for example, now a National Scholar, is the son of a beekeeper in a small rural community in the Middle West. This boy, whose teachers unanimously reported that he was the most likely student they had ever had, was a good athlete, a leader in his school class, an amateur scientist who had made his own collections of plants and insects, and had worked for years in a laboratory he had rigged up for himself in the farm cellar — a

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student whose reading had ranged from Darwin to J. T. Adams. His parents wrote that their son was so much of a scientist and thinker they doubted if he would ever make money. As for themselves, they added, they weren't much as money-makers either. Without full scholarship aid this boy would never have come to Harvard. All over America there are boys like the beekeeper's son — natural-born scientists, or engineers or artists or scholars. The deans of Harvard know how to find them. For one thing, they have advanced the technique of forecasting academic ability to such a point that they can select boys who will make honor records 90 per cent of the time. Here again the university would, if it could, greatly increase the investment.

## *The House Plan*

BUT it is not only to bring the ablest boys to the best education that Harvard would spend more money on its students if it could. It would do more for them once they had arrived: specifically, it would carry farther the great housing program initiated in the '20s. Prior to the gifts which made possible the seven present Houses, many if not most of Harvard's undergraduates lived a highly individualistic, not to say atomistic, social life. Boys from the fashionable schools were held together in groups the climate of which was the adolescent climate of the school, and there were also club and athletic groupings which had a certain coherence. But broader associations on an adult basis of common intellectual interest were almost unknown. The system was defended as making for greater self-reliance and individuality, but the Administration has never counted the imaginary benefits as outweighing the obvious losses. The individualism of the Harvard undergraduate was too often the individualism of loneliness, and the sophistication was too frequently the sophistication of cultural ignorance.



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The proof of the unhealthiness of the former practice is the speed with which it was dropped. There was considerable talk at the time of the opening of the first Houses about the unwillingness of the rugged Harvard individualist to live in such 'dormitories.' It was short-lived talk. Within a few years the two hundred or so upperclassmen living outside the House plan, simply because there was no room for them, were complaining orally and in writing (even in parodies of Dean Swift) that their exclusion was rank and brutal injustice. Life in the Houses provided the kind of association, the kind of talk, the kind of relationship, which are essential to the most exciting part of an education — the part a man provides for himself. No one who has attended an economics session at Dunster or a political-literary-political ruction at Leverett, or seen a Restoration play at Eliot, has any doubt but that a large part of the education of the present generations of Harvard men goes on in the Houses. And not the book education alone. For when, two years ago, it was estimated that on the average each member used his House library every other day through-

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out the year, it was also found that three to four times as many men were participating in sports as in the pre-House Plan era. If the House library is a hard-worked, hard-working part of the university system, and if the forums, lectures, readings, and the like are largely and warmly attended, the House dances and inter-House sports also play their useful part.

Briefly, the whole record of the Harvard House Plan is a record of unqualified success — a record which justifies and more than justifies the extension of the scheme to the two hundred undergraduates and the close to two thousand graduate students who now lack university housing of any description. Not only is the present state of the unhoused two thousand regrettable, — boardinghouse meals and boardinghouse rooms for the most part, with limited social relations outside their classes, — but the advantages to be gained by an extension of the House system are palpable and proven. Visitors to the Harvard Law School will remember the congested stairways and crowded doors where traffic is compelled to yield to conversation. Visitors to the Harvard Law School who

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have also seen a graduate school with adequate housing facilities like those at the Medical and Business Schools will make the inevitable comparison.

It has been observed above that the present period in the history of the university is a period of integration. But the integration of the university, the consolidation of its diverse parts, cannot be accomplished by official order. To bring living men together by their own volition it is necessary that they find congenial meeting places and that these congenial meeting places be always available. The Harvard housing problem will not be written down as solved until all students in the university, graduate as well as undergraduate, are given the advantages which have proved themselves in the seven Houses already built.

## *Conclusion*

THESE, then, may serve as examples of the nature of new scholarly enterprise within the university, and of the directions the next Harvard might be expected to take. That the university stands at the opening of a new period of great promise requires no argument. The facts speak for themselves. That the university's scholarship, which is the university's lifeblood, is full and vigorous is also manifest. It is difficult to think of any period in Harvard's history when more, and more hopeful, work has been blocked out by abler and more courageous minds. But across these hopes and this courage cuts arbitrarily and unarguably the fact that the university cannot finance the work which must be done.

The true picture of the next Harvard is the picture of those hopes seen through this uncertainty.







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